

MINUTES
BROWN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Monday, December 8, 2008

Green Bay Metro Transportation Center
901 University Avenue
Green Bay, Wisconsin
9:45 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Sunny Archambault	<u> x </u>	Nick Mahlik	<u> x </u>
Betty Bennett	<u> x </u>	Byia Martin	<u> x </u>
Linda Blohowiak	<u> x </u>	Barbara Natelle	<u> </u>
Diana Brown	<u> x </u>	Jennifer Nelson	<u> x </u>
Brandon Cooper	<u> </u>	Sandy Popp, Vice-Chair	<u> x </u>
Chris Culotta	<u> x </u>	Cole Runge, Chair	<u> x </u>
Pat Finder-Stone	<u> x </u>	Jayme Sellen	<u> x </u>
Chris Hasselbacher	<u> x </u>	Julie Tetzlaff	<u> x </u>
Kathy Hillary	<u> </u>	Mary Van Acker	<u> </u>
Kathy Johnson	<u> x </u>	Vacant – BC Board	<u> </u>

OTHERS PRESENT: Jean Baptiste-Martin, Lisa J. Conard, and Steve Rosenbaum (for Nick Mahlik).

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Introductions.

Committee members introduced themselves.

2. Election of a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

A motion was made by K. Johnson, seconded by S. Popp, to elect C. Runge as Chair. Motion carried.

A motion was made by K. Johnson, seconded by C. Runge, to elect S. Popp as Vice-Chair. Motion carried.

3. Discussion of the Transportation Coordinating Committee's purpose.

C. Runge stated that the Transportation Coordinating Committee (TCC) of Brown County would function similarly to the former Elderly and Disabled Transportation Subcommittee of the Brown County Planning Commission. C. Runge referred the committee to page #2 of the packet. The committee will have the following duties listed under 1 (b):

1. Monitor the expenditures of transportation funds being expended on transportation services for the elderly and disabled in the service area;

2. Review passenger transportation plans for the service area;
3. Review and comment on county aid applications under s. 85.21, Stats.;
4. Review and comment on capital assistance applications under s. 85.22, Stats.;
5. Act as an informational resource for local transportation providers regarding the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC 12101 et seq.; and
6. Act on requests by local public bodies to be designated as coordinators of transportation services for elderly and disabled persons for the purpose of becoming eligible for assistance under the federal sec. 5310 program.

C. Runge suggested that in addition to the above, the *2008 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Brown County* should act as a work program for the TCC.

C. Culotta asked that the duties of the chair and vice-chair be defined.

C. Runge stated that the duties of the chair will include:

- develop meeting agendas (approximately quarterly)
- run the meetings

The vice-chair will assume the duties of the chair in his absence.

K. Johnson asked if item #2: “review passenger transportation plans for the service area” included involvement in promoting the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) initiative.

C. Runge stated yes.

C. Runge stated that in order to form a RTA locally, the state must first pass enabling legislation. Representative Al Ott recently resigned from the Legislative Council's Special Committee on Regional Transportation Authority.

J. Sellen stated that the president of the Wisconsin State Senate plans to move forward with the initiative and appoint a new legislator to lead the effort.

C. Runge stated he feels at this point that establishing a RTA for the area will be the best way to enhance public transportation and transportation services to the elderly and persons with disabilities in Brown County.

C. Runge expressed that the TCC, as a whole, can advocate for a RTA.

B. Bennett asked about the financial impact of transit service on the service partners (Green Bay, Allouez, Ashwaubenon, Bellevue, De Pere, and the Oneida Tribe of Indians).

C. Runge stated that municipal budgets have been approved for 2009. In the future, a RTA could relieve the financial pressure on Green Bay and its partners.

K. Johnson stated that she and Mr. Chris Phelps, Transit Director, met with area municipalities in recent months. K. Johnson stated that officials understand the need

for transit and support transit services in their communities.

K. Johnson stated she is planning to contact Senator Dave Hansen in the near future to discuss the importance of establishing a RTA in the area.

C. Runge stated he would keep the TCC informed on the issue.

4. Discussion and action on the Brown County Aging and Disability Resource Center's application for 2009 Wisconsin Specialized Transportation Assistance Program (section 85.21) funds.

A copy of the application was included in the packet.

S. Archambault stated that the following agencies and transportation services were included in the application request: Red Cross (elderly and disabled transportation program), NEW Curative (client transportation), Brown County Human Services Department (van support and client fare subsidy), Salvation Army (vehicle operation for elderly grocery shopping trips), Oneida Transit (general operations), Driver Escort Program (rural transportation; primarily medical appointments), and Lamers, a private provider (adult day-care services). A small amount of funding is proposed to be allocated to staff time preparing the 2010 application and required public notice fee.

K. Johnson asked about the intent of the funds listed under #8 (Lamers).

S. Archambault stated the proposed 85.21 grant funds will cover a portion of adult day care transportation expenses. Brown County Human Services Department does contract with Lamers for services, but the lion's share is not included in this application.

A motion was made by K. Johnson, seconded by S. Popp, to recommend approval of the Aging and Disability Resource Center of Brown County's request for \$451,776 in State 85.21 funds. Diana Brown of NEW Curative and Jennifer Nelson of Red Cross abstained from the vote as their respective agencies are included in the application. Motion carried.

5. Presentation of the *2008 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan for Brown County*.

L. Conard provided an overview of the plan requirements and process. L. Conard noted that the plan was prepared by Brown County Planning Commission staff with assistance of many in attendance today.

L. Conard reviewed the following key action plan items:

Action Plan Items/Issues

1. Continue to study the possibly creating a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) in the Green Bay area, Brown County, or region.
2. Delay or prevent the need for specialized transportation services through mobility training.
3. Explore new programs such as New Freedom, Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC), Section 5310, etc. for possible local applications.
4. Explore the increased use of technology.

Action Plan Items/Issues (continued)

5. Educate elected local, state, and federal officials (policy makers) and the general public of the need for specialized transportation services.
6. Service gaps are often created due to lack of funding, as a result of institutional barriers, or other reasons.
7. Physical barriers, such as lack of sidewalks and curb cuts, restrict access to transportation services.
8. Immediate specialized transportation services are needed (for unforeseen circumstances, discharges from hospitals, etc.).

L. Conard stated that the plan will require an amendment if additional 5310, 5316, or 5317 projects are approved by the state.

S. Popp suggested that a Google Transit trip planning demonstration be provided to the TCC at its next meeting.

The Brown County Planning Commission staff agreed to do this.

C. Runge stated that the *How to Ride Bus* video was closed captioned thanks to a

grant received through the work of S. Popp. Planning staff is currently trying to upload the closed captioned video onto the internet. The English, Spanish, and Hmong versions are on line at this time.

L. Blohowiak stated she has shown the video to staff and clients.

C. Runge stated that Planning staff recently participated in a meeting with the coordinators of the Green Bay Area Public Schools special needs student program. Transit services and related resources such as Google Transit and the *How to Ride the Bus* video were discussed.

C. Runge suggested that item #6, service gaps, remains an important issue.

All of the transportation providers agreed that the request for specialized transportation services has increased. TCC committee members from the Red Cross and Medi-Vans agreed to keep track of trip denials for the month of January 2009. The data will be provided to C. Runge for discussion at the next meeting.

C. Runge noted that several of the items listed in the plan have already been completed. Others, such as #7, minimize barriers, may take years. Brown County Planning Commission staff has worked with local municipal staff and officials in an attempt to educate them on the benefits of sidewalks and appropriate design. However, it could take many years before a comprehensive system could take shape.

B. Bennett stated that she found herself temporarily using a wheelchair last summer. The experience revealed to her the needs of persons with disabilities in a way she had not known.

K. Johnson stated that Metro is looking at ways in which to provide service between UWGB, which is currently served by Metro, and the new Bellin College of Nursing in Bellevue, which is not served.

C. Runge stated that Action Item #5: educate elected officials, will remain very important.

P. Finder-Stone stated that the Bay Area Community Council has studied transportation issues in Brown County.

C. Runge stated that the Planning staff is aware of the council's efforts.

C. Runge stated that Planning and Metro staffs are currently meeting monthly with Cathy Putman of the Brown County Housing and Homeless Coalition to collect information and develop possible projects. Cathy Putman is working with Dr. David Littig and Mr. Harry Meier of the council. Survey work is in progress.

S. Popp stated that unexpected trips, such as being discharged from a hospital, can create a private pay scenario which may not be affordable to many.

S. Rosenbaum stated that hospitals do not have their own transportation services. In the past, Medi-Vans has worked with hospitals, but it is difficult to provide the service

since the need is infrequent and scheduling for the entire day has already occurred. S. Rosenbaum suggested there may be a need for five trips one day, zero the next, and two the following day. If the client is on Medicaid, the reimbursement rate is only approximately \$11.00 per trip and many providers are not willing to provide a trip for \$11.00.

S. Popp stated that it would be nice if the area's hospitals had vehicles that could transport special-needs patients home from the hospitals when their appointments are finished.

P. Finder-Stone and C. Runge will discuss this with hospital administrators and report their findings at the next meeting of the TCC.

6. Other matters.

The next meeting of the TCC is scheduled for Monday, March 9, at 9:45 a.m., at the Green Bay Metro Transportation Center.

7. Adjourn.

C. Runge closed the meeting at 11:08 a.m.